

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*) A monitor for a loss prevention system, comprising:

an RF communication circuit adapted for communication with at least one radio frequency identification tag;

a control circuit having a microprocessor and a memory, the control circuit being electrically connected to the RF communication circuit;

an alarm electrically connected to the ~~[[microcomputer]]~~ microprocessor; and

a computer readable program code stored in the memory and executing under control of the microprocessor, the program code having:

means for acquiring the identification tag by storing a unique identifier associated with the identification tag in the memory and associating the identifier with an alias;

means for dropping the identification tag by deleting the unique identifier associated with the identification tag from the memory;

means for operating the RF communication circuit to interrogate the identification tag; ~~[[and]]~~

means for causing the alarm to activate when the identification tag is out of range of the RF communication circuit; and

means for dropping the identification tag by deleting the unique identifier associated with the identification tag from the memory;

wherein said means for operating systematically polls each at least one identification tag, and said means for dropping deletes the unique identifier upon subsequent polling when the identification tag is determined out of range.

Claim 2. (*Original*) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said RF communication circuit comprises a wireless network interface adapter.

Claim 3. (*Original*) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said RF communication circuit comprises:

transmitting means for broadcasting an RF signal to the radio frequency identification tag; and

receiving means for receiving an RF signal from the radio frequency identification tag.

Claim 4. (*Original*) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 3, further comprising adjusting means for adjusting the sensitivity of said receiving means.

Claim 5. (*Original*) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 3, further comprising adjusting means for adjusting the signal strength of said transmitting means.

Claim 6. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, further comprising a housing containing said RF communication circuit and said control circuit.

Claim 7. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 6, further comprising a belt clip.

Claim 8. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, further comprising user interface means for displaying messages to and receiving input from a user, the user interface means being electrically connected to said control circuit.

Claim 9. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 8, further comprising a housing containing said RF communication circuit, said control circuit, and said user interface means.

Claim 10. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 9, further comprising a belt clip.

Claim 11. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said program code further comprises adjusting means for adjusting the sensitivity of said RF communication circuit.

Claim 12. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said alarm is an audible alarm.

Claim 13. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said alarm is a visual alarm.

Claim 14. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said alarm is a tactile alarm.

Claim 15. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said program code further comprises means for controlling an operating range of said RF communication circuit.

Claim 16. (Original) The monitor for a loss prevention system according to claim 1, wherein said program code further comprises means for dropping the identification tag.

Claim 17. (*Currently Amended*) A loss prevention system, comprising:

(a) a monitor having:

(i) a control circuit including a microprocessor and a memory;

(ii) a radio frequency communication circuit connected to the control circuit, including a transmitter and a receiver;

(iii) program code stored in the control circuit memory and executing under control of the microprocessor, the program code including:

(A) means for causing an interrogation signal to be transmitted by the transmitter;

(B) means for acquiring an identification tag number from a response to the interrogation signal, including storing the acquired tag number and associating an alias with the acquired tag number;

(~~[[c]]~~ C) means for repetitively transmitting the interrogation signal, and for tracking responses to the interrogation signal, including comparing responses to the acquired tag number;

(D) means for generating an alarm when the tracked responses fail to include the acquired tag number; and

(E) means for dropping the acquired identification tag number from memory;

wherein said means for dropping deletes the acquired tag number upon the repetitive tracking when subsequent tracked responses fails to include the acquired tag number; and

(b) at least one radio frequency identification tag adapted for attachment to an article to be tracked, the tag having:

(i) a memory having a unique identification number stored therein; and

(ii) transponder means for receiving the interrogation signal transmitted by the monitor and transmitting the unique identification number in response to the interrogation signal.

Claim 18. *(Original)* The loss prevention system according to claim 17, further comprising a housing, said RF communication circuit and said control circuit being disposed within the housing, the housing being dimensioned and configured for transport upon a user's person, whereby said monitor is portable.

Claim 19. *(Original)* The loss prevention system according to claim 17, wherein said monitor and said radio frequency identification tag both further comprise means for communication in a wireless personal area network.